

Appl. No. 09/545,639
Amdt. Dated 4/2/2004
Response to Office action dated 03/08/2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 and 33-47 are pending. No new matter has been added.

Disclaimers Relating to Claim Interpretation and Prosecution History Estoppel

Claims and have been amended, and claims have been canceled, notwithstanding the belief that these claims were allowable. Except as specifically admitted below, no claim elements have been narrowed. Claims 24-32 have been amended solely for the purpose of expediting the patent application process, and the amendments were not necessary for patentability.

Any reference herein to "the invention" is intended to refer to the specific claim or claims being addressed herein. The claims of this Application are intended to stand on their own and are not to be read in light of the prosecution history of any related or unrelated patent or patent application. Furthermore, no arguments in any prosecution history relate to any claim in this Application, except for arguments specifically directed to the claim.

Requirement for Restriction – 37 C.F.R. § 1.142

The Examiner issued a restriction requirement. The Detailed Action on page 2, point 1, identified Group I as claims 1-23 and 33-47, and Group II as claims 24-33. The Detailed Action on page 3, paragraph 6, identified Group I as claims 1-23 and 33-60. The Detailed Action on page 4, paragraph 7, identified Group II as claims 24-32.

It is believed that the identification of Group I and Group II on page 2, paragraph 1, of the Detailed Action contains a typographical error with regard to claim numbers. It is believed that the Examiner intended the grouping as shown in page 3, paragraph 6 and page 4, paragraph 7.

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In response to the restriction requirement, claims 24-32 have been canceled. Group I comprising claims 1-23 and 33-60 are elected.

Conclusion

In view of all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested and allowance at an early date is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned practitioner to answer any questions or to discuss steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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